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Review on a Series of Scientific Reviews of Agency Research Program

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The Board believes that its reviews of Agency research programs have proven to be a highly useful means of assessing the quality and relevance of existing research. These reviews have focused both the SAB's and the Agency's thinking on research plans and needs to a degree never before achieved through preparation and review of the Five Year Research and Development Plan (Research Outlook). The Board believes that is extensive research program reviews fulfill the spirit and intent of Congress for SAB oversight of the Agency's research program.

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UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON D C 20460

January 16, 1987

Honorable Lee M. Thomas
Administrator
U. S. Environmental Protection Agency
401 M Street, S. W.
Washington, D. C. 20460

SAB-EC-87-019

Dear Mr. Thomas:

The Science Advisory Board has conducted a series of scientific reviews of Agency research programs that have proven to be a highly useful means of assessing the quality and relevance of existing research, identifying research needs and involving the scientific community in the research planning process. Such reviews have also aided internal communication within the Office of Research and Development (ORD) and between ORD and the program offices.

The specific research programs SAB has reviewed since January 1986 include the following:

- Dioxins
- Biotechnology
- Extrapolation Modeling
- Water Quality
- Ecological Risk Assessment
- Alternative Hazardous Waste Control Technologies
- Superfund Innovative Technologies Evaluation
- Indoor Air Research Plan
- Integrated Air Cancer Project
- Radon Mitigation Program
- FY '88 Budget Proposal for the Office of Research and Development

In addition, the Science Advisory Board is scheduled to conduct scientific reviews for the following research programs later this fiscal year: advances in neurotoxicology, health effects of disinfectants and disinfectant by-products; acid deposition; radon and indoor air; biological control agents; effectiveness of asbestos removal processes; control of water quality in water distribution systems; land disposal; and waste minimization.

The purpose of presenting this information is to inform you that such reviews have focused both the SAB's and the Agency's thinking on research plans and needs to a degree never before achieved through preparation and review of the Five Year Research and Development Plan (Research Outlook). As you know, Congress has required that the Agency provide the SAB with the opportunity to review the Plan. The Board believes that its extensive research program reviews fulfill the spirit and intent of Congress for SAB oversight of the Agency's research program. Comments on specific issues in the five year plan have also been addressed in individual research program reviews.

The Board reiterates its long-standing support of research directed to address problems beyond the immediate regulatory needs of the Agency. It is preparing a separate report on this and other issues as it reviews the proposed research budget for Fiscal Year 1988.

Sincerely,

Norton Nelson
Chairman
Science Advisory Board